



MONTANA STATE HOSPITAL POLICY AND PROCEDURE

PATIENT ASSESSMENT POLICY

Effective Date: November 17, 2004

Policy #: TX-10

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I. PURPOSE:

- A. To outline a systematic process for gathering pertinent information about each MSH patient.
- B. To establish a comprehensive information base for decision making about each patient's care.
- C. To provide patients with the right care at the time it is needed.

II. POLICY:

- A. Patient assessment at MSH is an ongoing process that begins before the patient is admitted and continues throughout treatment.
- B. Pre-admission information as well as observations made at the time of admission will be used to determine the patient's initial placement in the hospital. Pertinent information obtained during the admission process is shared with the receiving treatment program staff.
- C. Once the patient arrives on the treatment unit, an initial assessment is done within the first hour to determine immediate care needs. More formal assessments to determine each patient's physical, psychological, social, and rehabilitation needs are conducted during the first week of hospitalization. Analysis of information from these basic assessments drives initial treatment and discharge planning, and may trigger additional assessments for nutritional, functional, educational, vocational, spiritual, legal, and other specialized treatment needs.
- D. For patients remaining in the Hospital for extended periods, admission assessment information is updated no less than annually. All formal assessments are conducted by staff with appropriate clinical qualifications.
- E. Patient acuity and needs determine the frequency of reassessment ie; a patient at high risk for self-harm may be observed/assessed continually while a stable patient with a history of polydipsia may be weighed and interviewed twice per shift. Reassessment of patient care needs including treatment plan review is also initiated at the following times:
 - 1. when there is a significant change in the patient's condition and, or diagnosis,
 - 2. when a patient is transferred from one MSH treatment program to another,
 - 3. at regularly established intervals, as established by state statute, and
 - 4. at the time of discharge.

- F. Information generated through analysis of assessment information is integrated to identify and prioritize an individualized plan of care for each MSH patient.

III. DEFINITIONS: None

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES:

- A. All clinical professionals are responsible for following the procedural guidelines to ensure an appropriate and timely completion of the various assessments.
- B. Health Information is responsible for tracking the timely completion of the various assessments and for notifying the responsible clinical professional in the event that required information appears to be missing or incomplete.

V. PROCEDURE:

A. Pre-admission Assessment:

1. Pre-admission assessment begins when the Admissions Coordinator or Nurse House Supervisor receives a call from a community referral source about a possible hospital admission. Information gathered at this time includes:
 - a. circumstances which precipitated the pending admission,
 - b. diagnosis(es) and medication history
 - c. additional physical health problems,
 - d. legal status, and
 - e. involvement in community mental health or other healthcare services.
2. This information is used:
 - a. to determine the appropriateness of the admission to MSH based on the patient's psychiatric and physical health status,
 - b. to determine the most suitable MSH treatment program placement,
 - c. as preliminary information for the receiving treatment team, and
 - d. for the utilization review process.
3. On some occasions, MSH does not have advance notice of an admission. At these times the information above is initially obtained when the patient arrives.

B. Initial Assessment:

1. An initial assessment will be completed by a Registered Nurse within one hour of the time each patient is received by the assigned treatment program staff. The Registered Nurse will evaluate initial assessment data to determine whether there is an immediate need for further medical or psychiatric evaluation and notify the appropriate physician accordingly.

2. Results of the initial assessment are documented in each patient's medical record.

C. Admission Assessments:

1. Comprehensive nursing and psychiatric assessments are completed for each patient within 24 hours of admission.
2. Each patient will receive a physical exam within 48 hours of the admission. Exams will be completed as soon as possible if problems are reported prior to admission or identified after arrival at the Hospital.
3. The social assessment is completed within seven (7) calendar days.
4. A rehabilitation assessment is also completed for each patient within seven (7) calendar days of admission.
5. In cases when patients refuse and/or acuity precludes obtaining a complete assessment, the reason for delay and plan for completion is documented in the medical record.
6. When assessment information has not been completed for a patient on emergency or court ordered detention status, and the patient does not return to the Hospital after court, an Emergency Detention Summary report is completed by the assigned professional and filed in the medical record. Admission assessments become a permanent part of each patient's medical record and are updated annually for patients who remain hospitalized for extended periods.
7. Admission assessments for special patient populations (i.e. patients with developmental disabilities) include additional elements. See individual policies for Physical Health Assessment, Nursing Assessment, Psychiatric Assessment, Social Assessment, and Rehabilitation Assessment for specific information about content and procedures for each component of the admission assessment process.
 - a. The Admission Psychiatric Evaluation is done by a psychiatrist or other licensed prescriber and results in a formal report, which includes psychiatric diagnoses and an initial treatment plan. A patient who is readmitted to Montana State Hospital within 7 days of a discharge may receive an interim psychiatric history. The interim assessment simply updates pertinent information from the previous admission.
 - b. The Nursing Assessment is completed by a Registered Nurse, although aspects of the assessment may be delegated to other nursing staff in accordance with Hospital policy and procedure. Analysis of nursing assessment information results in documentation of patient strengths, a needs assessment summary, and nursing care plan.
 - c. The Physical Health Assessment includes a comprehensive medical history and is completed by the medical clinic physician.
 - d. Completion of preadmission information initiates the social assessment process. Initial recommendations for treatment are made utilizing available information.

For each patient admitted to the Hospital for the first time, a comprehensive Initial Social Assessment is completed. An Interim Social Assessment is completed at the time of each readmission. The interim assessment updates areas that have changed. The family history will be reassessed at that time. Social Assessment information is evaluated resulting in recommendations for further assessment, treatment and discharge planning.

- e. The Rehabilitation Assessment is completed by professional rehabilitation staff. Analysis of information from this screening tool, results in documented recommendations for further assessment and treatment.

D. Additional Assessments:

1. Admission assessment procedures may trigger a need to further examine actual or potential areas of need for treatment. Trigger criteria, content and procedural guidelines for internal referrals are described in separate policies (i.e., the Nutritional Assessment).
2. Additional patient assessments are initiated by a physician's order and accomplished by:
 - a. internal referral and/or
 - b. referrals to outside specialists/consultants.
3. Internal Referrals: Focused assessments administered by MSH clinical and education staff include:
 - a. nutritional - registered dietitian
 - b. dental - licensed dentist
 - c. functional - professional rehabilitation staff
 - d. psychological - psychology staff
 - e. abuse/neglect - designated professional staff
 - f. social service - social services staff
 - g. substance abuse - certified chemical dependency professional
 - h. legal - designated professional staff
 - i. educational/vocational - professional rehabilitation staff

Routine internal referrals will be completed in five (5) days of the date ordered unless otherwise specified by the physician.

4. Outside Referrals: In addition to the above assessments, outside referrals to medical/dental specialty areas are made when a patient's physical condition requires further consultation. See the Consultation Services policy re: procedural guidelines for outside consultative services.

5. Analysis of additional assessment results will assist the treatment team to:

- a. identify care needs, and
- b. prioritize and refine the plan of care.

E. Assessment Tools and Documentation:

1. Assessment tools and formats for documentation will be developed by the clinical disciplines responsible for the specific evaluation. All evaluation tools will be approved by the department director/chief/supervisor prior to use with patients. Formats for the Admission Assessments (nursing, psychiatric, physical health, social, and rehabilitation) will be standardized throughout the Hospital.

- VI. REFERENCES:** MSH hospital policies: Physical Health Assessment, Nursing Assessment, Psychiatric Assessment, Social Assessment, Rehabilitation Assessment, and Nutritional Assessment
- VII. COLLABORATED WITH:** Medical Director, Director of Nursing Services, Social Work Discipline Chief, Psychology Discipline Chief, Director of Information Resources.
- VIII. RESCISSIONS:** TX-10, *Patient Assessment* dated February 14, 2000; HOPP #13-01.A 112691, Patient Assessment Policy, dated November 26, 1991
- IX. DISTRIBUTION:** All hospital policy manuals.
- X. REVIEW AND REISSUE DATE:** November 2007
- XI. FOLLOW-UP RESPONSIBILITY:** Medical Director
- XII. ATTACHMENTS:** None

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Ed Amberg
Hospital Administrator

Date

_____/____/____
Thomas Gray, MD
Medical Director

Date